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**REPORT ON THE PREPARATORY PROCESS FROM
PREPCOM-2 TO PREPCOM-3**

I Introduction

1 Organization of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

United Nations Resolution 56/183 on the organization of WSIS, adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2001, recommends that an open-ended intergovernmental preparatory committee be set up to prepare for WSIS. At the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, which took place from 1 to 5 July 2002¹, Mr Adama Samassékou, former Minister of Education of Mali, was elected as President. Also elected were 16 Vice-Presidents (three Vice-Presidents for each UN region, and two *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents for each of the two host countries (Switzerland and Tunisia)). These officials constitute the Bureau of PrepCom².

The second meeting of the Preparatory Committee took place from 17 to 28 February 2003 in Geneva.

II Second meeting of the Preparatory Committee

2 Decisions on intersessional work between PrepCom-2 and PrepCom-3

Three days were devoted to contributions from visionaries at the highest level and thematic round tables. The PrepCom-2 participants then examined, within Subcommittee 2 on content, the draft Declaration of Principles and the draft Action Plan for WSIS. Subcommittee 2 set up a working group under the chairmanship of South Africa.

At the end of the meeting and with the aim of ensuring continuity in the work on content, PrepCom-2 requested the Chairman of the working group of Subcommittee 2 to prepare, by 21 March 2003, a consolidation of the written contributions received at 28 February 2003, and draw up *basic working documents* for the future negotiations.

¹ PrepCom-1, cf: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/preparatory/prepcom/pc1/index.html>

² South Africa, Brunei Darussalam, Brazil, Dominican Republic, United States, Finland, France, Latvia, Libya, Mexico, Romania, Japan, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Tunisia.

PrepCom-2 mandated the President of PrepCom to oversee the intersessional work and, *inter alia*, to bring together a *formal intergovernmental drafting group for a five-day meeting in July 2003*, so as to advance negotiations on the content.

PrepCom-2 further decided to set up an *intersessional mechanism* to refine further the documents for the meeting of the aforementioned drafting group.

Finally, PrepCom-2 mandated the WSIS Executive Secretariat to *prepare a reference document* containing written contributions from participants, for publication on the WSIS website.

3 Implementation

Under the supervision of the President of PrepCom acting in liaison with the PrepCom Bureau, the *basic working documents* were drawn up and posted on the WSIS website on 21 March 2003, together with the *Reference Document* setting out all contributions received by 31 May 2003, namely from governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and civil society. The first part of the reference document was published on the website on 12 June 2003 and the whole document (376 pages) at the beginning of July 2003.

Through the good offices of the Director-General of UNESCO, a *meeting of the formal intergovernmental drafting group* was organized from 15 to 18 July 2003 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The dates were set on the basis of UNESCO availabilities and to avoid a clash with the APT meeting on information society initiatives organized in Bangalore from 21 to 25 July 2003.

PrepCom-2's decision to put in place an *intersessional mechanism* gave rise to lengthy and arduous discussion within the PrepCom Bureau, which was torn between a desire to adhere to the letter of the decision and the need to reflect the spirit of the decision in order to make significant progress in work on refining the documents during the intersessional period.

After several Bureau meetings and following bilateral consultations conducted by the PrepCom President with each member country of the Bureau and each regional group, the members of the Bureau decided to follow PrepCom-2's decision strictly to the letter. They therefore mandated the President of PrepCom, with assistance of the WSIS Executive Secretariat and in collaboration with the Chairman of the Working Group, merely to refine the documents without altering the content, so as not to prejudice the negotiations in July.

This refining work³ was submitted on 5 June 2003 to the members of the Bureau, who endorsed it. The refined documents were posted on the WSIS website on 5 June 2003.

In view of the enormous quantity of written contributions on the draft Declaration and draft Action Plan received by the Executive Secretariat up to the end of May, the President of PrepCom and the members of the Bureau both considered that it was necessary to carry out some consolidation work in order to make the basic working documents easier to use at the July intersessional meeting. Under a mandate from the Bureau, the President of PrepCom therefore prepared, with the assistance of the Executive Secretariat, *working documents* for the intersessional meeting, in which all the contributions from governments were incorporated. These documents were posted on the WSIS website in mid-June.

³ This work was carried out on the basis of four criteria: adapt the documents to UN format, avoid redundancies, ensure logical and coherent presentation, and make the working documents more readable.

Again with the same aim of preparing the July 2003 meeting effectively, the members of the Bureau also agreed to the proposal by the President of PrepCom to draw up, with the assistance of the WSIS Executive Secretariat, a *reader's guide*, as suggested by a member of the Bureau, for use by participants as a handy tool for rapidly identifying points of convergence and divergence and new points in the contributions on the draft Declaration and draft Action Plan. This reader's guide was drawn up, taking into account also the contributions from observers, and published on the WSIS website at the beginning of July 2003.

4 PrepCom Bureau

Since February 2003 the President has convened 12 meetings of the Bureau, three of them in Paris. The meetings served to analyse the decisions of PrepCom-2 and agree on how to proceed during the intersessional period up to PrepCom-3.

5 Dissemination of information to all WSIS participants

Throughout this period, the President has carried out various consultations with representatives of the private sector, civil society and intergovernmental organizations in order to keep them informed of the implementation of PrepCom-2's decisions, assuring them that their inputs are being taken into account in the documents. Furthermore, the regional group coordinators within the Bureau have also kept the representatives of countries of their region regularly informed on the WSIS preparatory process.

In addition, a special information meeting open to any interested party was organized on 23 June 2003 in Geneva, to provide information on the status of intersessional work and the issues to be addressed at the July meeting.

III Intersessional meeting

6 Organization and work

As indicated in § 3 above and pursuant to a decision of the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee, the President of the PrepCom convened a formal open-ended intergovernmental drafting group, held at UNESCO in Paris from 15 to 18 July 2003, with the mandate to advance negotiations on the draft Declaration and Action Plan. The drafting group meeting was attended by 750 delegates.

The opening session of the meeting, at the proposal of the PrepCom Bureau, elected Lyndall Shope-Mafole (Republic of South Africa) by acclamation as its Chairman. The agenda was adopted. The session was addressed by the Director-General of UNESCO, the Secretary-General of ITU and the President of the PrepCom, and by the Minister in charge of Research and New Technologies of France.

The work began with a discussion of the draft Declaration of Principles and the draft Action Plan, as refined since PrepCom-2. To advance the work, the Chairman established the following small groups to consider difficult issues: Right to Communicate, Internet Management, Good Governance and Network Security.

The meeting was open to observers. At the beginning of the deliberations, two hours were set aside for observers to express their priorities in relation to the basic documents; on subsequent days, observers were given the floor for one hour at the beginning of the meeting. The following observers addressed the meeting:

- Representatives of intergovernmental organizations: CERN, Council of Europe, ITSO, ITU, OECD, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UN Habitat, UN ICT Task Force, UNECA, UNITAR and WMO;
- Representatives of civil society: African Women's Development and Communication Network - FEMNET, AMARC, ANAIS Network, CSDPTT, Daisy Consortium, ENSTA, European Broadcasting Union, LANETA, IFUW, International Association for Media and Communication Research, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - IFLA, ISIS International, Molecular Diversity Preservation International, Rights & Democracy, Taking IT Global, University of Aarhus and Ville de Lyon - France;
- Representatives of the private sector: Alcatel, AT&T (ICC), Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), France Telecom, French Publishers Association (ICC), ICC, Masreya (ICC), Nokia and TAG International.

The meeting reviewed and revised the draft Declaration of Principles⁴, which will now be submitted for final negotiation at PrepCom-3 in Geneva. The meeting also exchanged views on the draft of the Action Plan⁵.

7 Further action

At its meeting on 18 July, the PrepCom Bureau decided to send the revised text of the draft Declaration direct to PrepCom-3, without amendment, and mandated the Chairman of the Drafting Group to carry out a further revision of the Action Plan, on the basis of the comments formulated at the intersessional meeting, during the intersessional period until PrepCom-3, with the assistance of the Executive Secretariat and under the supervision of the President of PrepCom. The Bureau also decided that the regional coordinators within the Bureau should be associated with this work, which would be examined at the Bureau's meeting on 22 August 2003. This decision of the Bureau was announced at the closure of the Paris meeting and distributed as a Note by the President of PrepCom⁶.

This task was completed within the set time-frame and the revised text of the draft Action Plan was published on the WSIS website on 26 August 2003⁷.

IV Activities undertaken to enhance the visibility of WSIS

8 Participation in international conferences

In his capacity as President of PrepCom, Mr Samassékou has participated in a series of events and conferences in order to inform participants of the preparatory work for the Summit and express his personal vision:

- OECD/UN/World Bank, "Forum on the knowledge economy. Integration of ICTs in development programmes", 4-5 March 2003, Paris, France
- 2nd Symposium on *Francophonie*, "Three dimensions of language: Cooperation, Diversity and Peace", 2-4 April 2003, Mexico City, Mexico

⁴ DT/4 (Rev.3): http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_single.asp?lang_en&id=894

⁵ DT/5: http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_single.asp?lang=en&id=648

⁶ DT/8: http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_single.asp?lang=en&id=700

⁷ DT/5 (Rev.1): http://www.itu.int/wsis/documents/doc_single.asp?lang=en&id=944

- EU/Greek Government, Symposium on e-inclusion, "Towards an information society in Europe for citizens", 11 April 2003, Heraklion, Crete, Greece
- Global Business Dialogue on e-commerce (GBDe), workshop on WSIS, 20 May 2003, Brussels, Belgium
- European Internet Foundation, Dinner debate, "Preparing for WSIS", 21 May 2003, Brussels, Belgium
- Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP), Annual Conference, "Knowledge for development initiatives", 21-23 May 2003, Rome, Italy
- UN ICT Task Force, Regional conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, "Towards WSIS - renewed roles for the private sector", 12-13 June 2003, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Arab League/Arab Republic of Egypt, Regional Pan-Arab Conference on WSIS, 16-18 June 2003, Cairo, Egypt
- EU/Italian Government, Conference on "e-government", 7-8 July 2003, Como, Italy
- African Union, Second ordinary assembly of Heads of State and Government, 10-12 July 2003, Maputo, Mozambique
- International Federation of Libraries Associations and Institutions (IFLA), World congress of libraries and information and general assembly, 1-9 August 2003, Berlin, Germany
- Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), 15th session "Securing the future: a strategic path for the next decade", 1-3 September 2003, Brunei Darussalam
- OIF/Government of Morocco, Conference of French-speaking ministers on the information society, 4-5 September 2003, Rabat, Morocco

9 Bilateral meetings/consultations

The President of PrepCom continued to place emphasis on bilateral meetings and consultations as a means of explaining WSIS objectives and issues and soliciting participation in the Summit at the highest political level. In this process, he has met, *inter alia* (in chronological order): the Sub-Secretary of State for Economic Relations and International Cooperation, Mexico; the Minister for Transport and Communications, Greece; the Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society of the European Communities; a member of the Cabinet of the Commission for External Relations of the European Communities; the Director-General of the General Directorate for Development of the European Communities; the Secretary-General of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States Group; the Secretary-General for *Francophonie*; the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; the Federative President of the Federative Republic of Brazil; the Minister for Education, the Minister for Science and Technology, the Minister for Assistance and Social Welfare, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Minister for Culture of the Federative Republic of Brazil; the President of the National Telecommunication Agency of Brazil; the Governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the Minister for Science and Technology, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the Minister of Communications, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt; the President of the Republic of Mali; the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mozambique; the Minister for Innovation and Technologies of Italy; the Minister in charge of Research and New Technologies, France; high-level representatives of the White House Council for New Technologies, the Department of State, the Department of Education and the American private sector, Washington; the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his staff in New York; the Parliamentary Secretary of State of the Ministry for the Economy, Germany; the Director-General for Global Issues, United Nations, Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Germany; His Majesty, Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan, Brunei Darussalam.